

German Nazism. More serious, the book rarely leaves the first level of description, and fails to concern itself in a significant way with principles of political organization and behavior. Similarly, it fails to make those comparative analyses out of which a systematic understanding of politics might possibly emerge. These faults, of course, are not peculiar to this work alone, and may, in fact, be inherent in the medium.—HERBERT McCLOSKEY, *University of Minnesota*.

The Front is Everywhere; Militant Communism in Action. BY WILLIAM R. KINTNER. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1950. Pp. xi, 274. \$3.75.)

If the Communist party is not a normal parliamentary party, what kind of beast is it? Answer: a military organization. As Col. Kintner sees it, "military methods and organization are inherent in the tactics and structure of every national Communist party—a truth which can be seen once the military nature of the Communist objective is laid bare" (p. 5). There is so much truth in this analogy that it is easy to understand Kintner's enthusiasm for it. Yet it must be said that he takes a somewhat over-literal and formalistic approach to the problem. Instead of using the analogy as a source of insight, deriving new propositions to illuminate an essentially political process, he contents himself with a point for point comparison between formal military organization and Communist party organization. This turns out to be unconvincing; and it leads to some rather important weaknesses in the analysis. Because of the over-literal military analogy, the role of violence in Communism is misconstrued. It is one thing to say, what is undoubtedly correct, that Communism will use violence whenever that is expedient; it is something else to say that we can better understand the nature of the party and its political strategy by relating that to the central aim of violence. In building a political army, the Communists have discovered a functional surrogate for violence—the continuous conquest of power in every area of social life. This activity, transforming members into deployable agents, requires and creates a quasi-military organization. The author does not fully grasp the relation between the Communist parties and the masses. In overemphasizing the military aspect he has largely ignored the fundamental synthesis which Lenin achieved. This synthesis is reflected in the effort to build an elite organization which is firmly linked, through organizational devices and stratagems, to the sources of potential power in society. Because he does not deal with this adequately, Kintner misreads the Communist idea of a "general staff of the revolution," looking for some structure in Communist organization analogous to the military general staff. In fact, however, this idea is relevant primarily to the way in which the vanguard party "guides and directs" the mass organizations over which it has control. In general, it is impossible to have a clear view of Communist organization, including its conspiratorial aspects, without a full understanding of the Party's role in the arenas of *political* combat. Notwithstanding the fact that some of us may find his analysis not fully adequate from the standpoint of political sociology, Col. Kintner's volume has the considerable merit of offering a fresh approach to the study of Bolshevik political warfare.—PHILIP SELZNICK, *University of California, Los Angeles*.